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Stream Reclassification

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Regional Water Division Directors
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The revised water quality standards regulation, section 131.10(d) contains several provisions governing the removal of designated uses, i.e. "downgradings." The regulation embodies our commitment to have standards move towards the Section 101(a)(2) goals of the Act and to use standards as a basis of restoring and maintaining the integrity of the nation's waters.

As you are well aware, the effort to develop a revised water quality standards regulation drew widespread attention. That same interest and attention is now being focused on how we implement the new regulation. You must be certain that any downgrading or the adoption of any less stringent water quality criteria is adequately supported and will be able to withstand close public scrutiny.

In developing the plans and schedules with the State to fully implement the provisions of the new regulation we expect you to take a reasonable approach as outlined in Jack Ravan's memo to the Regional Administrators, February 2, 1984. You should also take into account the extent to which the provisions in question have changed from the prior regulation.

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